

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 1073

don't want any money. As for the cost to local courts, this is a volunteer program and judges are not required to use this program. I wish Senator Wickersham...I think he's...we understand that the "sham" in Wickersham would be that he is not being forthright about why he is against this. He just doesn't like the program. But I ask you, do we pass good state policy because the state might be asked for money someday or sometime in the future? Senator Kristensen, he says courts don't want this. Judges and courts are not required to have it. As for Sarpy County already having this so this legislation isn't needed, I must tell you that Sarpy County Juvenile Court is the group who brought us this legislation, brought it to Senator Withem who introduced it last year and asked him to please get this passed. Saying the bill is too broad also is not accurate, because this stipulates that the volunteers must be trained with the specifications from the National CASA organization. It establishes the narrowing of the parameters under which the volunteers can operate. In the history of the CASA program, there has never been a case where a volunteer has run willy-nilly through the community broadcasting gossip about their cases. An intricate part of the national program brings confidentiality into the forefront of the required participation to be a volunteer. Furthermore, why does Senator Kristensen think only an attorney can be an advocate for a child who is being abused or neglected? Where is it written that a child advocate must have a law degree? By establishing a state organization, no community can be squeezed out of an organization. The group in Sidney that Senator Matzke told me about would have access to the information and help it required to advocate for Sidney's children. This is an important amendment and it saddens me to have to pull it, but pull it I am going to do. And I will be back next year. I am persistent if nothing else. Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you. Senator Suttle asked to have the amendment withdrawn. No objections? It is withdrawn. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Next amendment, Senator Witek had an amendment to the bill, but I have a note, Senator, you wish to withdraw.

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Witek. It is withdrawn.